



Chartered
Institute of
Housing
Scotland

A new Housing Bill for Scotland

Housing Festival Roundtable 5 March 2024

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A New Housing Bill for Scotland

Timing: The Bill is expected to be introduced before Summer recess

Content: we expect the Bill to cover the following

A New Deal
for Tenants

Domestic
abuse

Homelessness
prevention duty

Workforce
development

A New Deal for Tenants

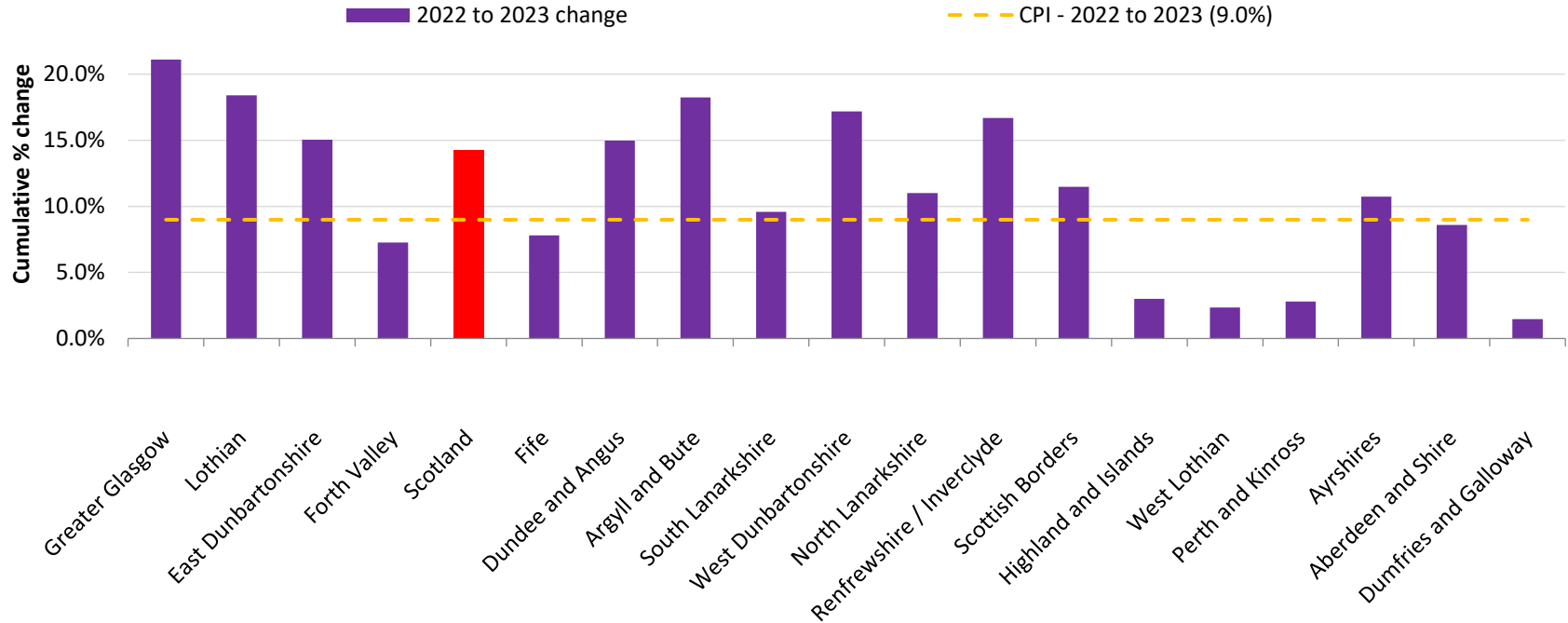
- A form of national rent control for the PRS.
- Greater penalties for illegal evictions.
- Rent adjudication – removing the ability for the Tribunal to put private tenants' rent up when they request a review.
- Greater flexibility for tenants to request personalisation to their property and the option to keep pets.

A NEW DEAL FOR TENANTS

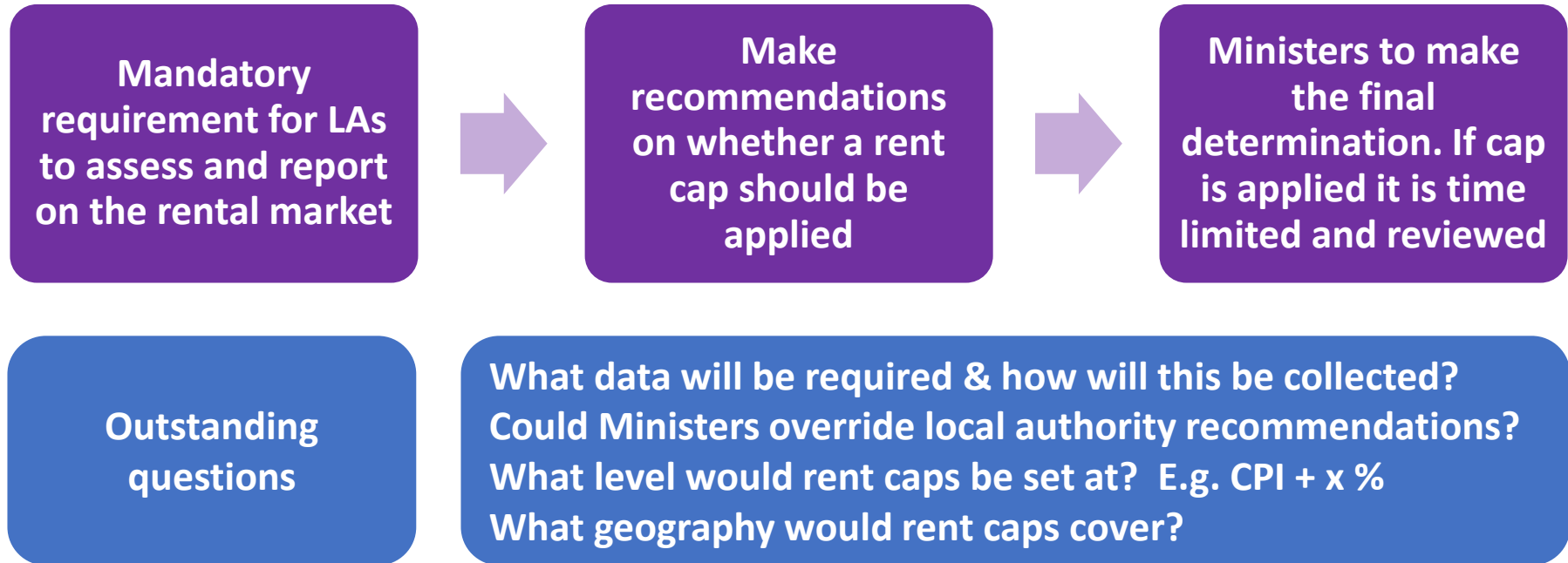
Draft Strategy Consultation Paper
December 2021



Impact of rent control: Average two-bedroom PRS rent increases 2022/23

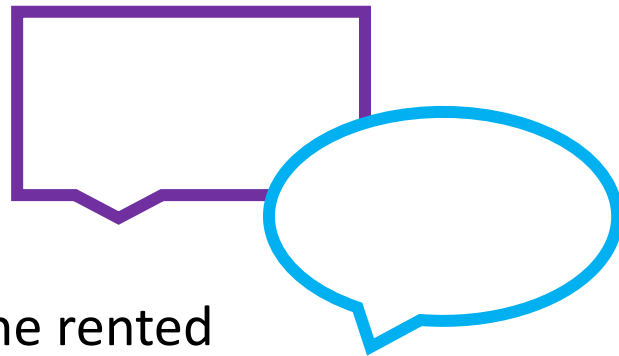



Rent control for the PRS - A national system with local flexibility





Questions to consider:



1. Are these the measures needed to improve the rented sector?
 2. Are there other steps that should be taken to improve security of tenure?
 3. What is the likely impact of introducing a system of rent control for the PRS? What would the positive or negative impacts be?
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Domestic abuse

- The Scottish Government has already introduced legislation to allow social landlords to end a joint tenancy to evict a perpetrator of domestic abuse.
- We expect the Housing Bill to include a new duty for all social landlords to develop and implement their own domestic abuse policy.

Improving housing outcomes
for women and children
experiencing domestic abuse

Scottish Government working group report
December 2020



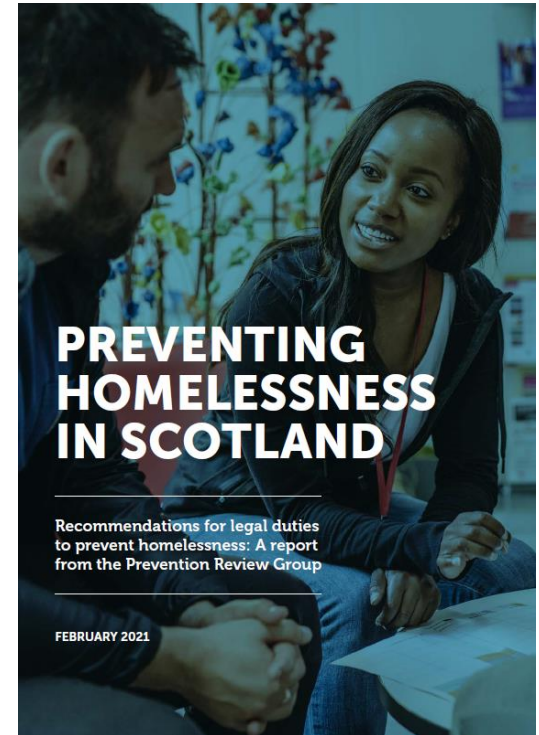
Questions to consider:



1. If your organisation doesn't already have a domestic abuse policy in place, what are the barriers to you developing and implementing one?
2. What further support is needed to ensure that social landlords have effective protections in place for victims of domestic abuse?
3. How can victims of domestic abuse living in the private sector be better protected/supported?

Homelessness prevention duty

- Following recommendations from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group, the Scottish Government committed to introducing a statutory duty to prevent homelessness.
- A Homelessness Prevention Review Group was convened to make recommendations on what the new duty should look like.
- A consultation was undertaken by the Scottish Government in 2022 to inform the new duty.



What will be included in the Bill?

We expect a high-level framework covering:



- The need for certain bodies to “ask and act”.
- A list of the bodies that will be covered including health & social care, children’s services, social landlords, PRS, and the criminal justice sector.
- A requirement for local authorities to provide six months support before homelessness (currently two months).
- Local authorities to take “reasonable steps” to prevent homelessness.
- Assessment of housing support needs to be included in Local Housing Strategies.

What we don't know

- What resources will be available to support implementation such as guidance, staff training and financial resources.
- How will prevention activities be tracked and measured?
- The final details to be consulted on following the Housing Bill.

Concerns

- Will the duty just become a referral pathway into LA homelessness services?
- Will a prevention duty re-open issues of “gatekeeping”?
- Have partners been involved enough in the process or will it still be seen as a housing issue?

Questions to consider:



1. We expect the new homelessness prevention duty to cover health and social care, children's services, social landlords, the private rented sector, and the criminal justice sector, are these the right organisations? Are there any missing?
2. What support would you/your organisation need for the duty to be implemented effectively?
3. Are there any unintended consequences that could arise from the proposed duty?

Workforce development and professionalism

- We don't expect the needs of the profession to be included in the Bill but think this is a missed opportunity.
- We need to make sure existing staff have the skills they need and attract new talent for the future.
- In Scotland some letting agency staff need to have a qualification, but not social or private landlords.
- The UK Government is introducing new legislation to require social housing managers to undertake a qualification.



Questions to consider:



1. Does the housing sector need a national strategy on workforce development, professional development and careers?
2. If so, what are the likely benefits of such a strategy to tenants and landlords and who should be involved in its development?
3. What role should secondary schools, colleges and universities have in the promotion of workforce development strategy?

Discussion time

